



COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

March 12, 2009 – 6:00 PM

**Permit and Resource Management Department
2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa CA 95403**

MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Liz Acosta, Chris Allen, Christina Brenner, Karen Famini, Rebecca Hollingsworth, Jan Kiely, Lisa Maldonado, Donna Roper, Priscilla Vivio

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Patricia Boyd, Mary Basham

JUNIOR COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Hailey Harris-Bloom

STAFF PRESENT: Dell Jacoby

I. CALL TO ORDER - INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF:

Acosta called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

II. CONSENT ITEMS: The Agenda for March 12, 2009 was approved; minutes from the February 5, 2009 Commission meeting were approved with minor revision. (Hollingsworth/Famini)

III. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

IV. COMMISSION UPDATE:

Swearing in of New Commissioners: Lisa Maldonado, representing the 3rd District, was sworn in. Lisa is the Executive Director of the North Bay Central Labor Council, has served on the Board of Directors of the ACLU of Sonoma County and has over 10 years of direct experience in working with battered women and children. Lisa is looking forward to serving with the Commission on issues relevant to women.

Appointments and Openings: Kiely reported that there is one vacancy in the 2nd District (1), one vacancy in the 4th District (1), and two vacancies in the 5th District (2), totaling four openings overall. When possible, Commissioners will distribute information about Commission openings.

V. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES:

Announcements:



- ◇ Hollingsworth reported on an invitation to her from the National Women's History Project (NWHP) to join their Board of Directors. Since Hollingsworth had recently brought a request to the Commission for financial sponsorship of the *A Sense of Wonder* production presented by the NWHP, full disclosure of this potential conflict of interest was recommended by County Counsel. Hollingsworth informed the Commission that her acceptance to serve on the Board of the NWHP is unconnected to the Commission vote to sponsor the event and that any interest she may have is of a remote nature.
- ◇ Vivio reported on the *Making a Difference for Women Award* luncheon to be held at the Flamingo Resort Hotel on March 26.
- ◇ Brenner reported she will be presenting on human trafficking at the Kiwanis Club in March and the Rotary in April.
- ◇ Kiely announced that the episode of Sonoma County Today that had been filmed in November was being shown on Channel 26 this week.

Supervisor Communication Updates:

- ◇ Brenner reported that she met with Supervisor Carrillo of the 5th District with Judy Rice, Commission representing the 5th District on the Commissioner on Human Rights. They discussed human trafficking. Supervisor Carrillo indicated he and Supervisor Brown of the 1st District will be writing a "Close to Home" article for the Press Democrat on this subject in late May or early June.

VI. OLD BUSINESS:

Ratification National Women's History Partnership Vote: Acosta called for a ratification vote of the motion approved by the Commission in February to sponsor the production *A Sense of Wonder*, presented by the National Women's History Project. Acosta explained that the ratification is required by County Counsel due to a potentially perceived conflict of interest between this request to sponsor and an invitation from the NWHP to place Commissioner Hollingsworth on the Board of Directors of the NWHP. The motion as adopted was to sponsor the project *A Sense of Wonder* at \$1,000, receiving acknowledgement in all publications, mention on the NWHP website as a sponsor, 2 tickets to the reception and 2 tickets to the play and acknowledgement at the reception (Roper/Famini.) Hollingsworth recused herself and a ratification vote was taken. **Action Ratified:** Sponsor the project *A Sense of Wonder* at \$1,000, receiving acknowledgement in all publications, mention on the NWHP website as a sponsor, 2 tickets to the reception and 2 tickets to the play and acknowledgement at the reception.

Junior Commissioner Trip to Sacramento: Hollingsworth updated the Commission on the upcoming trip to Sacramento and asked for Commissioner volunteers to assist her on the visit. Brenner and Vivio volunteered to assist. Staff will confirm with Hollingsworth whether she will require a County vehicle for the trip or whether the Commissioners will take their own cars and seek mileage reimbursement. Drivers must provide vehicle insurance and a valid driver's license by the week of March 30. The trip will be on April 7.

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

Liaison: North and South:

Acosta queried the Commission on the usefulness of having a North and South County Liaison, as currently we do not have Commissioners who can liaison and have limited contact with women's organizations specific to the North/South designation. Hollingsworth reported that the N/S designation was part of the Report Card effort and was used to get information to and from organizations. She felt the Commission may not need this structure now. **Action Taken:** Motion to remove the North/South Liaison from our work plan. (Famini/Brenner.)

NACW Membership: Staff informed the Commission that membership in the National Association of Commissions for Women has been forwarded to the Commission office. Benefits of the membership include e-alerts on important events and policy issues, access to directory of members, discounted registration at the annual conference, planned for July of 2009 in Arlington, VA. **Action Taken:** Direct Staff to send membership to the NACW (Kiely/Vivio.)

VIII. AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- ◇ **Junior Commission (Famini):** Famini reported that the Junior Commission meetings are going well. The trip to Sacramento is being planned by Hollingsworth, who indicated all is going forward. The Juniors will meet with legislative staff as the week of April 7 is legislative recess at the Capitol. A tour of the Capitol building is also being arranged. Hollingsworth, Brenner and Vivio will accompany the Juniors to Sacramento. To be determined is whether they will need a County vehicle or whether Commissioners will take their own cars and seek mileage reimbursement. Hollingsworth to notify staff the week of 3/23.

Haley Harris-Bloom updated the Commission on the progress of the Junior's projects. They are preparing the first draft to go to Jeanne Robinson, who will give editing advice. Final reports are due to Commission Staff by April 1. She also reported that Juniors will be participating in the NWHF production of *A Sense of Wonder*, providing introductions for the award winners.

- ◇ **Women's History Month Coordinator (Hollingsworth/Vivio):** Hollingsworth reported that she updated the curriculum packet for WHM and it was sent March 11 to Sonoma County of Education (SCOE). Hollingsworth also presented WHM curriculum to Steele Lane Elementary School and Country Day School.

Hollingsworth also reported on the planning for the *A Sense of Wonder* production. Lynn Woolsey will be present for the awards ceremony and Acosta will also present on behalf of the Commission. Junior Commissioners will participate in the awards program. There were seven local honorees.

- ◇ **Self-Sufficiency Calculator (Acosta):** Acosta opened a conversation about the Self-Sufficiency Calculator, a project adopted by the Commission but currently in hiatus due to unanticipated costs. Staff had been directed to contact Insight, the company hosting the Calculator to confirm prices, which were previously reported as \$3,000 per county plus training costs. Insight has offered a fee of \$1,000 for the balance of the fiscal year, but still requires training costs be picked up by the

subscriber at a cost of approximately \$40 per person. All agencies accessing the site would need to be trained. In discussion, Famini felt this is not what the Commission had envisioned when it included the project in its work plan. Hollingsworth wondered if this is a project that would be appropriate for the Family Justice Center and indicated it is out of the scope of the Commission's mission. Maldonado felt the Calculator would serve as a good incentive for women to seek financial solutions; the stagnant economy, job loss and over use of credit play into the issue. She felt this or another tool could be useful in the community. Acosta asked for an ad hoc work group to make a recommendation. Maldonado, Roper and Vivio will report back to the Commission at the April meeting.

◇ Organization Liaisons

- South County (TBD): No report.
- North County (TBD): No report.
- ACCW (Association of California Commissions on Women) Liaison (Acosta): Commission has been added to ACCW mailing list and will be notified of events and issues of importance.
- Family Violence Prevention Council Liaison (Boyd): No report.
- Community Issues Liaison (formerly Human Trafficking) (Brenner): Brenner reported the Human Trafficking Task Force is meeting regularly. Currently, law enforcement members are collecting data to examine the scope of the problem in the County; community based members are exploring education and outreach. The focus is on commercial sexual exploitation of youth, particularly on the Santa Rosa Avenue part of the trafficking circuit. It is the practice of traffickers to move those being exploited to other areas from where they were recruited. A recent sweep of Santa Rosa Avenue found exploited youth from outside the area of Sonoma County. Harris-Bloom, Junior Commissioner, reported that she is not aware of any teens involved in human trafficking or been introduced to the issue at school, but is sure there is interest among teens. She was encouraged to take the issue back to her school. Next meeting is to be determined. Final goal is a process for intake of those being trafficked, perhaps through the Family Justice Center.
- Non-Traditional Career Exploration Liaison (Brenner): Brenner reported the design committee for the K-16 Career Development project will be looking at job preparation for Latino youth. The task force was introduced to the book "Cultural Competency for Education Leaders" and had a conference call with the author, Randal B. Lindsey. The group is currently collecting data and hope to develop the program to become a model in the State. Maldonado also suggested a focus on vocational preparation and education, as the State has cut funding to those programs recently. She felt the goal of learning is ideal for college bound youth, but not feasible for all youth and that to lead a kid to believe college is the only answer was limiting their options.

◇ Representation and Legislation Task Force (Acosta/Roper): No report.

- ◇ Older Women's Issues Task Force (Allen/Kiely): Kiely reported that the Area Agency on Aging is sponsoring a State Commission on Aging informational meeting on June 2, details to come. Kiely and Allen have narrowed their focus for the project, as they have found that the Area Agency on Aging has many services for older women. One of the key issues they would like to explore is the downing of perceptions about older women and their ability to utilize their life and professional skills in the workplace or community. Many seniors, particularly women, are not given the opportunity to share their experiences and leave a legacy. Discussion ensued on the topic, with concerns of stereotyping. Roper reported that there are more older women in the shelters and requesting aide. Kiely hopes her appointment on the Advisory Council of the Area Agency on Aging will bring insight to these issues.
- ◇ Speakers Series Task Force (Brenner): Kiely reported she will be presenting at AAUW on March 17; Brenner reported she will be at Healdsburg High School on March 17 to present on Human Trafficking.
- ◇ Recruitment Task Force (Acosta): No report. The Commission has representation in all Districts.

IX. STAFF REPORT:

Correspondence: None

Attendance Report Distribution: Staff distributed the attendance report to Commissioners.

Update on Staff Activities: Staff updated the Commission on current budget planning for the Human Resources Department and the Commissions. Budget hearings for 2009-10 will be early this year, date to be determined.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be on Thursday, April 9, 2009 at 6:00 PM.

X. ADJOURNMENT: Acosta adjourned the meeting at 8:20 PM.